



PRICE CATCH

Delays in approvals and rising input costs push up cost of Bengaluru Metro's Phase 2 expansion by over Rs 16,000 crore

PAGE 5



DUSTED & DONE

Villagers want KSPCB officer to help out as sponge iron manufacturing units near their homes make life unbearable

PAGE 6

HOW TO IDENTIFY A SPEEDSTER: Drives an SUV, prefers to hit expressways in Bengaluru Metropolitan Region. Study looks deeper into driver behaviour and pinpoints factors that makes motorists go full throttle

NEED FOR SPEED

Even 1 kmph rise in speed can lead to 4-5% increase in fatal crashes

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In a city known for its bumper-to-bumper traffic, there are some roads that are speeding hotspots, a new road safety report reveals. The study also points to drivers of SUVs as those that tend to speed the most.

The latest 2025 status report by the Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit under the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety in collaboration with NIMHANS, shows that overall speeding in the Bengaluru Metropolitan Region (BMR) that includes Bengaluru city, Bengaluru Rural and Ramanagara district, has dropped sharply.

Between October 2022 and May 2025, the share of vehicles found speeding fell from 30% to 19%, an improvement that points to better enforcement and growing awareness.

Speaking about the decline in speeding, Dr. Gautham M Sukumar, Additional Professor of Epidemiology and Head of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Injury Prevention at NIMHANS, who led the study, said, "We cannot say this has happened due to one specific reason. However, in Bengaluru, enforcement has clearly increased. Three years ago, there were fewer speed enforcement drives. Since then, the number of vehicles, traffic volume, and road



Profile of people who choose SUVs is often different from those who buy smaller or regular cars, with many SUV owners showing a greater inclination towards driving at higher speeds

—Dr. Gautham M Sukumar, WHO Collaborating Centre for Injury Prevention at NIMHANS, lead author of study

users have all gone up, and speed cameras are now more widespread. All these factors together have contributed to the reduction in speeding," he said.

But this progress comes with a warning, where among light motor vehicles the data shows that nearly 29% of SUVs were still found driving above the speed limit. Among all vehicle categories, light motor vehicles recorded the highest levels of speeding at 20%. Across Karnataka, speeding among all observed vehicles across the state was high at 30%. With 53% of SUVs and 50% of sedans and 41% of buses exceeding posted speed limits.

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From buses to bikes

Motor vehicle ownership grows; Karnataka's bottom 40% households driving quiet consumption shift



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A decade ago, for a farm worker or a daily-wage earner on the outskirts of Bengaluru, mobility often meant waiting for an infrequent bus or walking long distances. Today, that same household is increasingly likely to own a two-wheeler parked outside its home. The Household Consumption Expenditure Survey comparing 2011-12 and 2023-24 captures this shift, showing how Karnataka's bottom 40% households are redefining consumption, access and opportunity.

The numbers are striking. Across India, motor vehicle ownership among rural bottom 40% households rose from just 6.2% in 2011-12 to 47.1% in 2023-24. Karnataka is among the leaders in this transition, with 69.1% of its rural bottom 40 households owning a motor vehicle, second only to Punjab. This is not merely about buying a bike or scooter. It signals a deeper change in how households connect to jobs, markets, schools and healthcare.

Motor vehicle ownership has emerged as the strongest marker of inclusive growth in Karnataka. Faster rural growth has sharply reduced the urban-rural gap in mobility

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 >>

THINGS TO DO

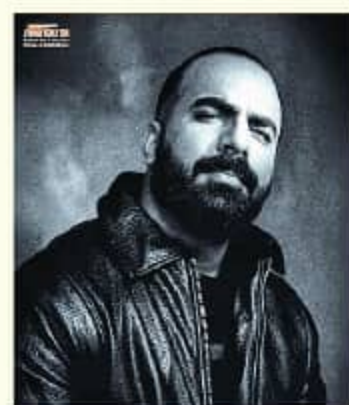
01 Contemporary reflections



The 12th Attakkalari India Biennial presents 'Your Symptoms' and 'Flight', a double bill performance by Melancholy Dance Company from South Korea, as part of BLR Hubba. **Where:** Prestige Centre for Performing Arts, Konanakunte; **When:** January 25, 7.30 pm

02 Heart-to-heart

Faheem Abdullah, the Kashmiri singer-songwriter behind deeply resonant tracks like Saiyaara, Ishq, Ehsaas, and Sajde, whose music has quietly become the soundtrack to longing, love, and introspection for a new generation, is set to perform in a Valentine's Day concert in Bengaluru. **Where:** Bhartiya Mall of Bengaluru; **When:** February 14, 7.30 pm



03 Turn it up

Windmills presents a two night live performance by Aditya Prakash Ensemble, working at the intersection of improvisation, drawing from Carnatic traditions while also engaging with jazz, folk, and contemporary forms. **Where:** Windmills Craftworks, Whitefield; **When:** Jan 23 and 24



04 Harmony unbound

This season, Banyan Tree Events marks a special milestone as their flagship festival, TCS Ruhaniyat - Seeking the Divine, completes 25 glorious years. More than a festival, Ruhaniyat is a soulful journey through the verses of mystics and saints, carried forward by extraordinary artists. **Where:** Jayamahar Palace Hotel; **When:** January 24, 6.15 pm

05 AI transformation

FICCI FLO, India's leading women-led chamber of commerce, has announced AI INDIA 2026 - Led by Women. The landmark national artificial intelligence conclave will bring together women leaders, entrepreneurs, professionals, and senior executives from 21 FLO chapters across India. **Where:** ITC Gardenia, Ashok Nagar; **When:** January 22, 10 am



Education Department issues guidelines for SSLC exams

In the wake of the SSLC Preparatory Examination-1 question paper leak, the School Education Department has issued fresh guidelines for conducting the second and third preparatory exams. Instead of the Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board, the remaining exams will now be conducted under the leadership of the Commissioner of School Education, as per a departmental circular. DDPIs and BEOs have been entrusted with exam responsibilities. Use of mobile phones by teachers and students during the exam is prohibited, and receiving or sharing question papers prior to the exam has been strictly banned. Headmasters must download the question papers only on the day of the exam and maintain complete confidentiality. DIET principals have been directed to visit and inspect exam centres. Students must report to schools by 9 am, question papers should be downloaded and printed by 9.30 am, packed between 10 and 10.30 am, and opened in the presence of students at 11 am. — BMB

₹2,071-crore project underway to improve sewage treatment capacity

To significantly enhance the city's sewage treatment capacity, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) is preparing to establish nine new Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) with a combined capacity of 535 MLD at a cost of Rs 2,071.49 crore. The proposal has already received government approval, and the processes for raising loans and inviting tenders are underway. Once completed, Bengaluru's total sewage treatment capacity is expected to rise to about 1,881.5 MLD, with the long-term goal of meeting an estimated requirement of 2,740 MLD. A BWSSB official said, "The new STPs will come up at around nine locations across the city, including Hulimavu, Ulsoor and other areas, adding roughly 620 MLD to the existing capacity of about



2,120 MLD."

Of the nine proposed plants, five will generate electricity from biogas, producing up to 4 MW of power—an approach being adopted on a larger scale in the city for the first time. An official added, "The power generated will be used for plant operations, meeting at least 50 per cent of their electricity needs and reducing dependence on BESCOM, thereby cutting costs. The plants will use advanced, environment-friendly anaerobic treatment and tertiary filtration technologies to meet new pollution control and National Green Tribunal standards." — BMB

Voter list special revision likely to begin next month

The preliminary work for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Karnataka is nearly complete, and the official revision process is likely to begin from next month. The Election Commission of India has already been conducting SIR exercises in several states, and in Karnataka, preparatory work was initiated last December. As part of this process, voter lists from 2002 and 2025 are being compared, and of the state's 5.547 crore voters, details of about 3.05 crore voters have been successfully matched so far. An official said that as part of the SIR pre-revision exercise, booth-level officers will conduct door-to-door verification of voter details, collecting information on deceased voters, those who have changed addresses, and individuals registered in more than one place. Only voters who submit valid documents will be retained on the rolls, helping authorities arrive at an accurate count of eligible voters. The preliminary phase of the SIR process is expected to be completed by the end of this month, officials added. — BMB

VIBE CHECK Where we CHECK in on what is rad in Bengaluru

Changing tastes, changing times

Experts and studies highlight youth's growing inclination to plant-based foods, driven not just by personal health goals but by concerns for environment and animal welfare

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Gen Z is increasingly shifting toward plant-based diets, reflecting a global trend that blends health consciousness with environmental and ethical awareness. Increasing conversations around climate change and sustainable lifestyles have made plant-based eating not just a dietary choice, but a statement of values for this generation. Health professionals pointed out that market surveys indicate that 20-30 per cent of Gen Z actively identify as vegetarian, vegan, or flexitarian, showing a significant departure from dietary habits of previous generations.

What exactly is a plant-based diet?

According to Dr Aditi Apte, Chief Nutritionist at Aster RV Hospital, a plant-based diet focuses on foods derived from plants, including vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and minimally processed options. She explained that plant-based diets can range from fully vegan to flexitarian, and unlike some interpretations, they are not synonymous with vegan-only. "It's more about orientation toward plant foods. Vegetarian diets exclude meat but may include dairy while



vegan diets eliminate all animal products. A plant-based diet, however, is more about emphasis than exclusion. Someone following a plant-based diet may still consume small amounts of animal foods, but the foundation of their meals remains plant-forward and whole-food focused," said Dr Apte.

Shift in eating habits

Recent studies suggest that Gen Z's inclination toward plant-based diets is rising faster than in older generations, driven not just by personal health goals but by concerns for the environment and animal welfare. Speaking on the nutritional adequacy of such diets, Dr Apte said that when properly planned, plant-

based diets can be nutritionally adequate across all age groups, including adolescents and young adults. "These diets can provide sufficient protein, fibre, vitamins, and minerals needed for growth, energy, and overall health. However, certain nutrients require special attention, particularly vitamin B12, iron, calcium, vitamin D, iodine, and omega-3 fatty acids," explained Dr Apte.

Benefits and concerns

Prachi Chandra, Lead Clinical Nutritionist at Sakra World Hospital, said that surveys suggest that roughly 20-30 per cent of young adults actively reduce animal foods, reflecting a sig-

nificant shift in food choices among this generation. "Benefits include improved heart health, better gut health, weight management, and reduced risk of chronic disease, while also lowering carbon footprint and sup-

Health professionals suggest gradual transition to plant-based diet, proper education and consulting professionals rather than relying solely on social media trends

porting sustainability," she said, while highlighting the benefits associated with a plant-based diet. She noted challenges in nutrient planning, social pressures, and fixed eating habits. She pointed out that affordable options exist through staples like lentils, beans etc.

Health professionals say common challenges of plant-based diets include concerns about protein, limited nutritional awareness, social habits, and difficulties with meal planning or eating out. Another concern is the misconception that all plant-based foods are inherently healthy, while in reality, many ultra-processed vegan options can be high in salt, sugar, and unhealthy fats. They advised gradual transition, proper education, and consulting a nutritionist rather than relying solely on social media trends.

Man arrested for house theft, gold recovered



The Madanayakanahalli police arrested a man involved in house theft and recovered stolen gold worth ₹42 lakh.

The accused was apprehended near Pandavapura in Mandya district on January 11, following a tip-off from informants.

The case dates back to August 7, when the complainants from Ancephalya village had locked their house and traveled to Tamil Nadu. On August 9, their neighbours alerted them about the burglary. Upon returning, the family found that the front door lock and gate had been broken, and 248 grams of gold jewellery were stolen from the first-floor wardrobe.

During interrogation, the accused confessed to committing the theft with a relative and revealed he had sold the stolen ornaments at three jewellery shops, two in Pandavapura and one in Mysuru. Police recovered a total of 348 grams of gold and a two-wheeler used in the crime.

BMB

23-year-old with women's underwear fetish arrested

A 23-year-old man was arrested by Hebbagodi police for allegedly stealing women's undergarments and putting them on public display causing public nuisance and discomfort among residents.

According to the police, a neighbour alerted Namma 112, reporting that a youth was allegedly stealing women's undergarments in the area. Police rushed

to the spot and found women's inner garments hanging in public view near his house. On verification, officers discovered that the garments had been stolen from nearby homes and were deliberately displayed to outrage the modesty of women.

Acting on the complaints, the police carried out a search operation and detained the suspect. He was identified as Amal

N Aji, also known as Aji Kumar NU, who hails from Kerala and had moved to Bengaluru about six months ago. He had completed a diploma course but was unemployed and was staying in a rented house with a friend.

Preliminary investigations revealed that Amal had allegedly worn the stolen garments and recorded videos and photographs on his phone. A search of

his residence led to the seizure of more women's undergarments. He was taken into custody at the spot, and a suo motu case was registered against him.

A case has been booked under Sections 303(2) (theft), 329(4) (criminal trespass), and 79 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

BMB

Murder probe: Inspector suspended for negligence

City police commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh has suspended Jnanabharathi police station Inspector Ravikumar for alleged negligence and dereliction of duty in a murder case. The suspension follows a preliminary inquiry that reported serious lapses in the handling of the investigation.

The murder was reported nearly four months ago within Jnanabharathi police limits. However, Inspector Ravikumar reportedly delayed the registration of the First Information Report (FIR) and attempted to evade responsibility by suggesting that the incident fell under the neighbouring Tavarekere police station. Following his direction, efforts were made to transfer the case, but a spot inspection by Tavarekere police confirmed the crime occurred within Jnanabharathi limits, and the case was returned.

The repeated transfers led to unnecessary delays in the investigation, and even after the case was returned, the inspector reportedly made minimal efforts to gather evidence or identify suspects, leading to complaints being raised with senior officials.

BMB

Drug trafficking ring busted, MDMA, Ecstasy worth ₹5.15 cr seized

The Anti-Narcotics Wing (ANW) of the Central Crime Branch (CCB) has busted a major drug trafficking operation, seizing 2.5 kg of MDMA and 300 Ecstasy tablets valued at ₹5.15 crore.

According to police officers, ANW officials conducted a raid at a rented house in Munnekolala under Marathahalli police jurisdiction acting on a tip-off and arrested a foreign national involved in the illegal trade. Interrogation revealed that the accused had been operating his narcotics business

from the residence. The accused has been identified as Ernest Onyekachi Ugah (45), a Nigerian residing in Munnekolala. He arrived in India in 2020 on a medical visa, which later expired, and he reportedly continued to stay in the country illegally while engaging in drug trafficking.

Investigations indicate that the accused had two prior cases registered against him at Hennur and Kadugodi police stations for drug trafficking. Following his recent release from jail, he had resumed the illicit activities. CCB ANW officers had been closely

monitoring his movements before apprehending him during another transaction. A case has been registered under the NDPS Act, and further investigations are underway.

BMB

3 BMTC conductors suspended over UPI fraud: The BMTC on Tuesday suspended three conductors for allegedly misusing the UPI ticketing system to divert the fare payments to their bank accounts. The BMTC has introduced the system to make payments for tickets

through UPI. During routine inspections in December last year, BMTC inspection teams detected that Suresh, Manchengowda and Ashwak Khan were not using the officially provided BMTC UPI scanners for ticket issuance. PTI

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Vehicle ownership grew from 6.2% in 2011-12 to 47.1% in 2023-24

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

assets, unlike in several eastern and northern states where disparities persist. Sigma convergence data shows Karnataka recording one of the lowest ownership gaps between lower- and higher-consumption groups in both rural and urban areas. In simple terms, access to mobility is spreading more evenly across income groups. For rural households, this shift has tangible economic meaning. Easier access to transport reduces travel time, expands job options beyond the village and lowers dependence on unreliable public transport. It also supports non-farm employment, which has become an increasingly important income source in rural Karnataka.

The report highlights the rise in vehicle ownership reflecting years of investment in roads, electrification and credit access. Two-wheelers, in particular, have benefited from affordable financing and rising rural wages. Compared to states like Odisha, Bihar and Jammu and Kashmir, where less than one-third of rural bottom 40 households own a motor vehicle, Karnataka's numbers point to a more balanced development path.

Screen shifts

A similar story of access emerges in recreational goods, though with important differences. Rural television ownership nationally rose from 49.6% to 61.1%, and Karnataka continues to stay above the national average. Among rural bottom 40 households, TV ownership has increased significantly, narrowing the gap with the overall rural population. This has implications for information access, awareness and social inclusion.

In urban Karnataka, however, television ownership has stagnated or dipped slightly. This reflects a broader behavioural shift, with smartphones and personal devices increasingly replacing televisions as the primary screen. For media planners and policymakers, this signals the need for mobile-first communication strategies, stated the report.

Refrigerator ownership highlights an early-adoption phase in rural Karnataka. While ownership is rising, disparities have widened, suggesting that better-off households are leading adoption. In urban areas, convergence is visible, indicating a mature market where access is more evenly spread. "Taken together, the data shows Karnataka moving into a new phase of consumption-led inclusion. Mobility has become the foundation of this shift. The next challenge will be to ensure that higher-value durables and digital access follow the same inclusive trajectory, turning everyday asset ownership into long-term economic resilience," said Siddarth V, an economics professor.

Kasavanahalli residents struggle after administrative reorganisation

Funds shortage claims emerge as sanitation collapses, footpaths vanish, shelters shrink, traffic risks multiply unchecked

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Kasavanahalli, once part of the Bellandur ward under the BBMP, was recently designated as a separate ward — Ward 31 — following the formation of the Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA). The area was moved from the East Zone to the South Zone, but residents say the condition of the ward has only worsened since the administrative change.

Citizens in Kasavanahalli report that little to no administrative work is taking place. Residents allege that when they tried to complain to authorities in the South Zone, they were told that adequate funds were still not available for the ward. Meanwhile, residents are witnessing growing problems on the ground, including footpath encroachments, encroachment of bus shelters, deteriorating roads, lack of regular cleaning, and persistent sewage issues. Many residents have attributed these problems to misgovernance.

"Despite repeated complaints to the authorities, the situation remains unchanged. Our streets and bus stops are facing encroachments, garbage is piling up, and the roads are breaking down. Citizens are struggling to move around safely, and yet there is little action from the authorities," said Vishnu Prasad, a representative of the Kasavanahalli Development Forum.

The Kasavanahalli Road bus stop



Local voices cite encroachments, sewage hazards, broken streets, worsening mobility following administrative reorganisation, apathy, oversight failures affecting commuters, families, livelihoods

has become a focal point of concern for daily commuters. Residents say vendors have partially encroached on the bus shelter, leaving very little space for people to stand or sit while waiting for buses. The surrounding footpath has uneven surfaces and is often cluttered with garbage and construction debris, forcing pedestrians to walk dangerously close to moving traffic. Waste dumped near trees and along compound walls further reflects poor solid waste management in the area.

Citizens point out that awareness campaigns or initiatives aimed at improving pedestrian infrastructure are of little use if execution on the ground does not follow. Similar issues, they note, are common along stretches of Sarjapur Road, Haralur and Junnasandra, areas that see heavy footfall from office-goers, students and residents.

Another resident highlighted the poor condition of Kasavanahalli-Hosa Road between MAX and Choodasandra Circle, a stretch of just one kilometre. Footpaths are virtually non-existent, garbage litters the entire area, and there are 10-15 black spots along this short stretch, posing a major health hazard. While Prasad pointed out that Hejje Gala, a three-month corporate active mobility challenge aimed at encouraging walking and cycling across Bengaluru, has been initiated by the authorities, he said they must first inspect and fix pedestrian infrastructure, which is absent in many places.

"Pedestrian infrastructure must be fixed before these drives are launched. Safe walking spaces are still a distant goal in Kasavanahalli," he added. Officials were unavailable for comment.

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Pavement hazard HRBR Layout



A commercial building in HRBR 3rd Block has raised the pavement, posing a serious risk to pedestrian safety.

Dangerous pothole Dr Rajkumar Road



A large pothole near the circle opposite Orion Mall, beside the Vishvesvaraya statue at the end of Dr Rajkumar Road on West of Chord Road, has remained unattended for over three weeks.

Historic site slips off bureaucratic radar

Penalty threat follows engineers admitting ignorance during enquiry over protected site heritage lapse sparks outrage

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In recent years, the Martyrs' Memorial near Mysore Bank Circle in the city has been overshadowed, with the space around it allegedly encroached upon by the Shaneshwara Temple Trust. Many activists raised their voices against this, but no efforts were made by the authorities concerned to restore the space around the Martyrs' Memorial. Now, the respective ward engineers of the Bengaluru Central City Corporation are unaware of the Martyrs' Memorial, and no documents or information are available with them.

The Information Commissioner, based on a petition filed by HM Venkatesh, has directed the Assistant Engineer of the Vasantanagar Sub-Division of the Bengaluru Central City Corporation to file objections to the proposal to impose a penalty of ₹25,000 on him for dereliction of duty.

"The information sought by the petitioner is in the public interest. Many people, including

Commission orders explanation after records missing, civic responsibility questioned, accountability demanded amid allegations encroachment negligence delays governance failure highlighted publicly

students and workers, died during the Quit India Movement, and the government installed a memorial in 1972 in memory of the martyrs. The reply from the BCCC assistant engineer to the petitioner's query indicates his ignorance of the existence of the Martyrs' Memorial. It is mentioned in Volume 5 of the Karnataka Gazette, 1972," the order read.

The Information Commissioner said that Assistant Engineer Rudramuni had forgotten both the existence of the Martyrs' Memorial and his duty to protect it. "I am directing him to show cause as to why a penalty of ₹25,000 should not be imposed on him under Section 20(1) of the Right to Infor-



mation Act," the order stated. The hearing of the petition has been adjourned to January 20. Coming down heavily on the authorities for neglecting the Martyrs' Memorial, HM Venkatesh of Naija Horatagarara Vedike said the Congress claims that its leaders fought for the freedom of the country, but Congress leaders in Karnataka, especially in Bengaluru, have done nothing to preserve and protect the Martyrs' Memorial. "I want the Congress, which is at the helm of affairs in the state, to protect the Martyrs' Memorial," Venkatesh said.

Metro phase 2 cost jumps 53%, delay drives bill up

Delayed clearances trigger loan interest surge, materials inflation, redesign pressures, lenders' approvals stalled repeatedly earlier

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Bengaluru Metro's Phase 2 expansion has become significantly more expensive, with the project cost shooting up by over ₹16,000 crore, largely due to delays in approvals and rising input costs. The revised estimate has increased from ₹26,405 crore to ₹40,425 crore — an escalation of about 53 per cent. The state government has urged the Centre to clear the revised proposal, pointing out that prolonged delays have directly translated into a higher financial burden on Karnataka.

Officials said the revised cost reflects interest accumulated on loans taken from international lenders such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the European Investment Bank, apart from sharp increases in construction material prices. Cement, steel, iron and other inputs have become far costlier since the project was first conceived, pushing up overall expenditure. Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has flagged the issue with the Centre, stating that timely approvals could have prevented such a steep escalation.

Project status

Phase 2 includes two crucial corridors — the Yellow Line from Central Silk Board to KR Puram under Phase 2A, and the Blue Line from KR Puram to Kempegowda International Airport under Phase 2B. The Yellow Line, which connects key IT hubs such as HSR Layout, Bellandur, Marathahalli and Doddanekkundi, spans 18.2 km and



Loan interest, land acquisition, and design changes escalate costs, threatening timely completion of metro corridors

includes 13 stations. Around 65–70 per cent of the work on this stretch has been completed.

The Blue Line, covering 36.4 km with 17 stations up to the airport, has seen about 45–55 per cent progress so far, with pillar construction between KR Puram and Hebbal nearing 60 per cent. Overall, considering the full Blue Line length of 54.6 km, about 55–60 per

cent of the work is complete. The target is to finish construction by December 2026, with full commercial operations likely only in early 2027.

Why it rose

Officials attribute the cost escalation not just to delays but also to changes made during execution. In several stretches, alignment modifications, longer tunnel sections, station relocations and the addition of new technical systems have pushed up expenses. Land acquisition in dense urban pockets and around Yelahanka has also added to the bill. With property prices in city areas rising sharply, compensation costs have further inflated the budget.

Funding burden

Under the funding model, the Centre and the state are expected to contribute 20 per cent each, while the remaining 60 per cent is raised through loans. Repayment of these loans rests largely with the state and the metro corporation. With approvals taking longer than expected, interest costs have mounted, turning delays into a direct financial hit.

"While the state remains optimistic that faster clearances could still prevent further escalation, the Phase 2 experience underlines how time overruns can sharply alter the economics of large urban infrastructure projects in Bengaluru," an official said.

Even coconut shells are cash now



Many Bengalureans are surprised to see vendors knocking on their doors and calling out for coconut shells, something that until recently was thrown away as waste. From tender coconut water and coconuts to copra, shells and husk, almost every part of the coconut tree has turned into a source of income, benefiting not only farmers but also urban households.

Tender coconuts now cost more than ₹60 apiece. Coconuts are trading between ₹25,000 and ₹38,000 per sapir. Copra is priced at ₹25,000 to ₹28,000 per quintal. Coconut shells are fetching ₹28,000 to ₹34,000 per load, while husk is sold at ₹500 to ₹1,000 per thousand. Scrap dealers, who once dealt mainly in iron, plastic and paper, are now going door to door in villages and towns, offering up to ₹20 per kg for coconut shells and husk.

Ironically, demand for coconut shells and husk had dipped earlier when tiled houses were replaced by RCC buildings and firewood gave way to solar heaters, gas geysers and electric appliances. Traders said the sharp increase in demand is now being driven by buyers from Tamil Nadu and Kerala, where factories are sourcing shells and husk to produce charcoal and carbon powder for export.

Coconut shell charcoal and powder are used in water and sugar purification, cosmetics and printer cartridges. Fibre extracted from husk is used to make ropes, decorative items and compost for nurseries. With strong overseas demand, factories in neighbouring states are competing to procure raw material from Karnataka. —BMB

CCB recover Rs 2.16 crore in email spoofing fraud

CB police officials have successfully recovered the entire ₹2.16 crore lost in an email spoofing fraud within the crucial "golden hour," in what authorities say is the first-ever instance of a full recovery in such a cybercrime case.

According to police officials, Hyderabad-based pharmaceutical giant Dr Reddy's Laboratories fell victim to an email spoofing fraud on February 2, 2025. Representatives of partner firm Group Pharma reported to the Cyber Crime Police Station that unknown cybercriminals had impersonated the official email ID of Keshava Group Pharmaceuticals — kkeskava@grouppharma.in — and sent a fraudulent payment request to Dr Reddy's Laboratories, a



business partner based on MG Road, Hyderabad. The spoofed email closely mimicked the genuine domain, making the request appear legitimate.

Acting on the email, Dr Reddy's Laboratories transferred ₹2.16 crore to a mule account at Bank of Baroda in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The fraud was detected within minutes, and the company immediately

alerted the authorities. Acting swiftly, the Cyber Crime Police traced the network of transactions and froze the mule account. Further investigation revealed that the fraud was orchestrated by cybercriminals operating from Nigeria, who used multiple step-wise transfers to obscure the money trail. The mule account was traced to a private bank branch in Gujarat, held in the name of a consultancy firm and operated by a 57-year-old woman. The scam took place on November 4, 2025, and a formal complaint was lodged with the authorities the following day.

The 45th Court allowed the bank to refund the victim company. Probes hint at insider involvement and scams via official emails. BMB

HUB Interior Strengthens Bengaluru Presence with Premium Experience Centre in JP Nagar

Showcasing deeply personal, lifestyle driven interior experience in bengaluru



Founded with the vision of redefining how Indian homes are designed and experienced, HUB Interior is a lifestyle-led interior design brand known for creating deeply personal, one-of-a-kind homes. The brand is built on the belief that a home should reflect the people who live in it not templates, trends, or standardised layouts. This philosophy is captured in HUB Interior's signature approach: Homes Uniquely Built.

Recognised as one of India's most innovative interior brands, HUB Interior has launched its third Experience Centre in Bengaluru, located at JP Nagar, reinforcing its commitment to personalised, lifestyle driven interiors. Designed as a premium and immersive destination, the centre brings the brand's philosophy to life through curated environments and real-world design experiences.

Unlike conventional showrooms that focus on products or catalogues, the HUB Interior Experience Centre allows homeowners to experience design as lived reality. Through personalised walkthroughs and thoughtfully crafted spaces, visitors can understand how routines, habits, creativity, and individuality are translated into functional, beautiful homes.

Susmita Mandal, Founder & CFO, HUB Interior, said: "For us, a home is never about repeating a design or fitting someone into a template. Every family lives differently, and their home should reflect that. This Experience Centre shows how a person's lifestyle, habits, and personality can be thoughtfully designed into space. That is what Homes Uniquely Built truly stands for."

Kanishk Jain, Partner, HUB Interior, added: "What sets HUB Interior apart is the clarity in how we think, design, and execute. Every home we create is intentional, deeply personal, and never repeated. The Experience Centre brings that difference to life."

With over 5,000 completed residential projects, HUB Interior continues to strengthen its presence across Bengaluru, particularly in South Bengaluru, as it expands its footprint and deepens its connection with homeowners seeking meaningful, personalised design.

Villagers choke as sponge iron units poison Hirebaganal air

Six years of unchecked industrial emissions leave villagers battling asthma, livestock illness, and official apathy from pollution authorities

I Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Hundreds of families at Hirebaganal village in Koppal District have been facing a lot of problems due to air pollution caused by sponge iron manufacturing units functioning just 500 meters away from the village. They have been running from pillar to post seeking a solution for the last six years but in vain.

With no other option, the villagers are now looking towards Bengaluru, hoping the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) will step in to address their concerns. Residents say repeated appeals to elected representatives and local environment officials have yielded little action, despite mounting health problems linked to air pollution from the nearby industrial cluster.

According to villagers, at least four sponge iron manufacturing units located adjacent to the village are major contributors to the pollution. They allege that the units release thick black smoke, often due to chimneys being operated with open caps, allowing untreated emissions to escape directly into the air. Residents claim that mandatory pollution-control mechanisms are being bypassed to reduce operational costs.

"We have been complaining to elected representatives and environment officials, but they have failed to ensure the industries follow the



Left: Assistant Environmental Officer inspecting pollution at Hirebaganal village; Right: One of the four iron sponge manufacturing unit near Hirebaganal village

norms. We are fed up with their apathy," said Mahesha Vadnal, a villager. He recalled that when an environment officer was invited to the village recently, residents asked him to place his hand on a temple bell. "There was black dust on it. We also asked him to inspect our water and kitchens to see how soot has become part of our daily lives," he said.

The health impact, villagers say, is severe and visible. Many residents are reportedly suffering from respiratory problems, including asthma, while soot-laden dust settles on



homes, farmland and even children. "Children are breathing polluted air every day. This is no longer just an environmental issue, but a public health emergency," a resident said.

The issue has also affected livestock. A veterinary doctor wrote to the Assistant Director of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services on January 3, 2024, stating that several goats and buffaloes fell ill after consuming fodder contaminated with soot-laden dust.

In response to villagers' complaints, Koppal Environmental Officer Harishankar and Assistant Environmental Officer Amar recently visited Hirebaganal. They confirmed

air pollution caused by some sponge iron manufacturing units. "We inspected a few houses and found soot-laden dust. A report was sent to the Senior Environmental Officer in Bengaluru for appropriate action," Harishankar said.

However, the Senior Environmental Officer in Bengaluru said he had not received any such report. "If I receive the report, I will look into the matter," he said.

Meanwhile, villagers say assurances from industry representatives to reduce pollution remain to be seen on the ground, as they continue to live under a blanket of soot, waiting for concrete action.

Delhi High Court gives date to hear DKS plea against ED probe

Court lists March 10 hearing on Deputy CM's challenge to Enforcement Directorate's money laundering probe

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday listed for hearing on March 10 a petition filed by Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar challenging a money laundering probe initiated against him by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

Shivakumar, a senior Congress leader, had approached the high court in 2022 seeking the quashing of the entire investigation, including summons issued to him under an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) registered by the ED in 2020. The ECIR followed an alleged disproportionate assets case registered against him. A bench headed by Justice Navin Chawla deferred the matter after the petitioner's senior counsel sought an accommodation. The bench, also comprising Justice Ravinder Dubeja, directed that the plea be listed for hearing on March 10.

Court hears arguments on Shivakumar's plea alleging ED reinvestigation, while agency denies double jeopardy claim

In his petition, Shivakumar has contended that the ED was unlawfully re-investigating the same offence which it had already probed earlier. He has argued that the present proceedings amounted to a second round of investigation and constituted an abuse of the legal process, alleging malafide exercise of power by the agency. In submissions filed through his lawyers Mayank Jain, Parmatma Singh and Madhur Jain, he maintained that the probe violated settled principles of law.

Earlier, on May 2, 2023, the high court had recorded the ED's assurance that it would not take any coercive action against Shivakumar during the pendency of the proceedings.

Opposing the plea, the ED has stated in its counter-affidavit that the two ECIRs against Shivakumar were based on different facts, different scheduled offences and distinct financial transactions. According to the agency, the first ECIR pertained to an offence under Section 120B of the IPC and involved alleged proceeds of crime amounting to ₹8.59 crore.

The present ECIR, the ED said, relates to alleged disproportionate assets worth ₹74.93 crore and arose from a separate FIR registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation in Bengaluru on October 3, 2020 under the Prevention of Corruption Act. The agency added that preliminary inquiries indicated Shivakumar and his family possessed assets disproportionate to known sources of income during the period between April 1, 2013 and April 30, 2018. The ED has further argued that claims of double jeopardy cannot be examined at the investigation stage.

— PTI

M B Patil courts global giants to scale Karnataka's manufacturing ambitions

At World Economic Forum 2026, Karnataka pitches Vijayapura, sustainability, and talent to attract food, beverage, and advanced materials investments

In a push to cement Karnataka's position as a global manufacturing powerhouse, M B Patil, Karnataka's Minister for Commerce & Industries and Infrastructure, has initiated a series of strategic engagements at the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2026. Leading the state's delegation with an "execution-first" mandate, the Minister has secured significant interest from global leaders in the food processing and sustainable materials sectors, potentially bringing billions in investment to the state. The delegation's first breakthrough came during a high-level meeting with the leadership of The Coca-Cola Company, where discussions focused on the strategic expansion of its operations in Karnataka. This builds on the company's earlier commitment of Rs 25,760 crore towards India's

food processing sector. Minister Patil used the opportunity to pitch Vijayapura as a future industrial hub for the beverage major, citing the region's relatively sustainable water availability as a key advantage for large-scale manufacturing.

Sharing the update on X, the Minister said Vijayapura had been highlighted as a priority industrial destination, with the state offering long-term resource security and full governmental facilitation. Officials said the approach reflects Karnataka's strategy of backing investment proposals with assured infrastructure, policy support and inter-departmental coordination to secure high-impact projects that generate employment beyond Bengaluru. The focus then shifted to advanced material science, with the Minister meeting representatives of Natural Fiber Welding (NFW Earth), a US-based company known for developing plastic-free, plant-based alternatives to leather and textiles. NFW Earth, which works with global brands such as BMW, Adidas and Levi's, expressed strong interest in expanding its manufacturing footprint in India. The company outlined a proposed Phase-



I investment in the range of Rs 1,600 crore to Rs 1,800 crore.

Officials said the delegation briefed the company on Karnataka's industrial incentive framework and assured support on approvals, infrastructure and ecosystem linkages. NFW Earth is expected to submit a detailed project proposal to the state government in the coming weeks. The Minister also held a high-level dialogue with brewing major AB InBev, engaging with its Chief Legal and Corporate Affairs Officer John Blood. With an existing presence in Mysuru and Bengaluru, the company discussed plans to further leverage Karnataka's manufacturing ecosystem and talent base. The state reiterated its commitment to seamless facilitation and continued support for future expansion.

— ANI



The average American checks their phone over 140 times a day, clocking an average of 4.5 hours of daily use, with 57% of people admitting they're "addicted" to their phone. Tech companies, influencers and other content creators compete for all that attention, which has incentivised the rise of misinformation.

Considering this challenging information landscape, strong critical reading skills are as relevant and necessary as they've ever been.

Unfortunately, literacy continues to be a serious concern. Reading comprehension scores have continued to decline. The majority of Gen Z parents are not reading aloud to their young children because they view it as a chore. Many college students cannot make it through an entire book. With their endless scrolling and easy reposting and sharing of content, social media platforms are designed to encourage passive engagement that people use to relieve boredom and escape stress.

As a cognitive scientist and a literacy expert, we research the ways people process information through reading. Based on our work, we believe that deep reading can be an effective way to counter misinformation as well as reduce stress and loneliness. It can be tough to go deeper than a speedy skim, but there are strategies you can use to strengthen important reading skills.

Deep reading versus doomscrolling

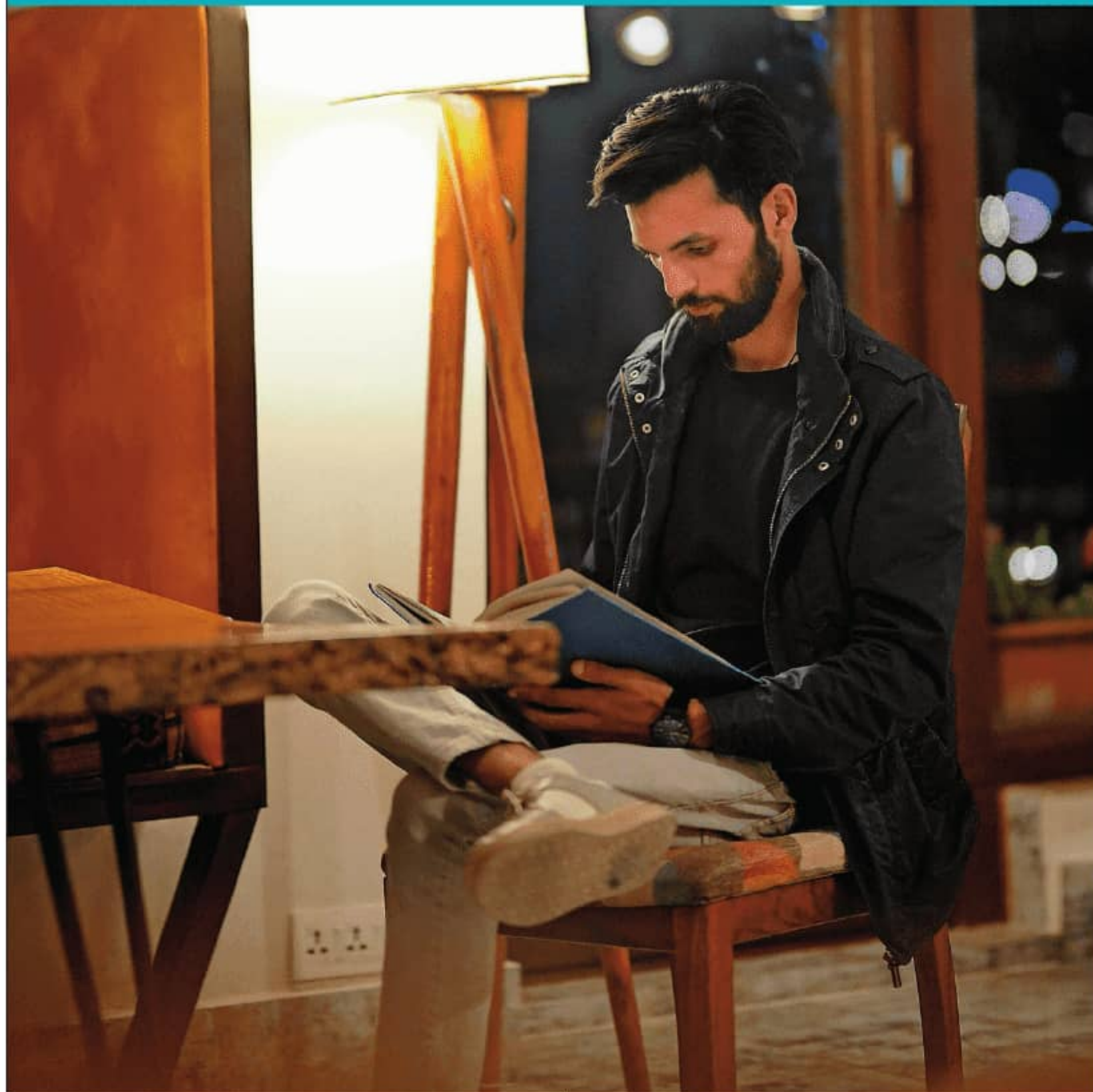
People use smartphones and social media for a variety of reasons, such as to relieve boredom, seek attention, make connections and share news. The infinite amount of information available at your fingertips can lead to information overload, interfering with how you pay attention and make decisions. Research from cognitive science helps to explain how scrolling trains your brain to think passively.

To keep people engaged, social media algorithms feed people content similar to what they've already engaged with, reinforcing users' beliefs with similar posts. Repeated exposure to information increases its believability, especially if different sources repeat the information, an effect known as illusory truth.

Deep reading, on the other hand, refers to the intentional process of engaging

ROLLING IN THE DEEP

Deep reading can boost your critical thinking – here's how to build the skill



with information in critical, analytical and empathetic ways. It involves making inferences, drawing connections, engaging with different perspectives and questioning possible interpretations.

Deep reading does require effort. It can trigger negative feelings like irritation or confusion, and it can very often feel unpleasant. The important question, then: Why would anyone choose the hard work of deep reading when they can just scroll and skim?

Motivating mental effort

Mindless scrolling may come with unintended consequences. Smartphone and social media

use is associated with increased boredom and loneliness. And doomscrolling is related to higher levels of existential anxiety and misanthropy.

In contrast, attention and effort, despite being exhausting, can deepen your sense of purpose and strengthen social connection. People also feel motivated to complete tasks that help them pursue personal goals, especially when these tasks are recognized by others. For these reasons, sharing books may be one tool to promote deep reading.

One example is a teacher who guides students through longer texts, like novels, paired with active discussions about the books to reinforce comprehension and

interpretation. While the debate over the ongoing practice of assigning excerpts over full books in schools continues, evidence does suggest that sustained reading in social settings can promote lifelong enjoyment in reading.

Slowing yourself down to read deeply

There are steps you can take to meaningfully engage with the constant stream of information you encounter. Of course, this process can be taxing, and people only have so much effort and attention to expend. It's important to both recognise your limited cognitive resources and be intentional about how you direct those resources.

Simply being aware of how digital reading practices shape your brain can encourage new attitudes and habits toward how you consume information. Just pausing can reduce susceptibility to misinformation. Taking a few extra seconds to consciously judge information can counteract illusory truth, indicating that intentionally slowing down even just a bit can be beneficial.

Reading deeply means being able to intentionally choose when to read at different speeds, slowing down as needed to wrestle with difficult passages, savor striking prose, critically evaluate information, and reflect on the meaning of a text. It involves entering into a dialogue with the text rather than gleaning information.

Awareness does not mean that you never doomscroll at the end of a long day. But it does mean becoming conscious of the need to also stick with a single text more frequently and to engage with different perspectives.

You can start small, perhaps with poems, short stories or essays, before moving up to longer texts. Partner with a friend or family member and set a goal to read a full-length novel or nonfiction book. Accomplish that goal in small chunks, such as reading one chapter a day and discussing what you read with your reading buddy. Practising deep reading, such as reading novels, can open you up to new perspectives and ideas that you can explore in conversation with others.

(By JT Torres, Washington and Lee University and Jeff Saerys-Foy, Quinnipiac University, *The Conversation*)



All you need to know about...

Hair thinning

1. Identify The Root Cause
According to Dr. Rinky Kapoor, Co-Founder and Director, The Esthetic Clinics® (TEC®), hair thinning is often a subtle message from the body that something deeper needs attention.

Medical conditions such as Iron deficiency, thyroid irregularities, postpartum hormonal shifts, long-term stress, and nutritional gaps etc all these can quietly disrupt the hair growth cycle. Identifying these patterns early allows you to address the cause. Go for a proper medical evaluation and basic blood tests which can offer clarity.

2. Nourish Hair From Within
Healthy hair is built internally before it's visible externally. Diets low in protein, iron, vitamin D, or essential fatty acids weaken hair strands and increase shedding. Dr. Rinky emphasises nutrient-dense eating such as lentils, leafy greens, eggs, nuts, seeds, and seasonal fruits to support follicle health. In addition to eating good food, proper hydration is equally important.

3. Simplify Hair Care Routine
Sometimes, hair thinning worsens not because of what we lack but because of what we overdo. Our everyday habits such as excessive washing, frequent colouring, tight hairstyles, and heat styling strain the follicles over a period of time. Switching to sulfate-free shampoos, reducing heat exposure, and allowing hair recovery periods between chemical treatments can reduce breakage.

4. Balance Hormones And Stress Levels

Dr Michael Gold, Research Mentor, QR678®, highlights the strong link between hormones, stress, and hair health. Fluctuating estrogen levels in women, thyroid dysfunction, and chronic stress can also interrupt the hair growth cycle and push follicles prematurely into the shedding phase. One should manage the stress with adequate sleep, practising mindful habits, and professional medical support plays a critical role in stabilising hair loss patterns and restoring balance.



MIRRORLIGHTS

Human heart regrows muscle cells after heart attack: Study

In a world-first discovery, scientists in Australia have found that the human heart can regrow muscle cells after a heart attack, raising hopes for future regenerative treatments for heart failure.

The study, published in *Circulation Research*, revealed that while parts of the heart remain scarred after a heart attack, new muscle cells are also produced, a phenomenon previously seen only in mice and now demonstrated in humans for

the first time, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Until now we've thought that, because heart cells die after a heart attack, those areas of the heart were irreparably damaged, leaving the heart less able to pump blood to the body's organs," said Robert Hume, research fellow at the University of Sydney and first author of the study.

"In time, we hope to develop therapies that can amplify the heart's natural ability to produce new cells and regenerate the

heart after an attack," said Hume, also lead of translational research at Australia's Baird Institute for Applied Heart and Lung Research.

Though increased mitosis (a process in which cells divide and reproduce) after a heart attack has been observed in the heart muscles of mice, this is the first time the phenomenon has been demonstrated in humans.

The team made the breakthrough using living heart tissue samples collected from patients undergoing bypass surgery at

Australia's Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

"Ultimately, the goal is to use this discovery to make new heart cells that can reverse heart failure," said Professor Sean Lal, the study's senior author and heart failure cardiologist at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

Cardiovascular disease remains the world's leading cause of death, and heart attacks can eliminate a third of the cells in the human heart, researchers said, adding that the discovery offers promising groundwork for novel regenerative medicine. —IANS

22% of vehicles exceeded speed limit on expressways

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Perils of speeding

The study highlighted that higher speeds significantly increase both the risk of crashes and the severity of injuries. It noted that even a 1 kmph rise in average vehicle speed can lead to a 3% increase in injury-related crashes and a 4-5% increase in fatal crashes.

Dr. Sukumar states that higher levels of speeding among SUV drivers could be linked to multiple factors. He explained that the profile of people who choose SUVs is often different from those who buy smaller or regular cars, with many SUV owners showing a greater inclination towards driving at higher speeds. SUVs are also generally

more powerful vehicles, which may make it easier for drivers to speed.

Dr. Sukumar added that while some non-SUV cars are equally powerful, they are not found to be speeding as frequently, indicating that driver behaviour and vehicle choice together play a key role in the rising trend of SUV-related speeding.

The study found that speeding was highest on expressways in the Bengaluru Metropolitan Region (BMR), with 22% of vehicles exceeding the speed limit. Arterial roads followed at 18%, while local and collector roads recorded relatively lower levels of speeding at 16%.

Explaining the trend, Dr. Sukumar said expressways naturally encourage higher speeds

because of their design. "These roads have wide lanes, smooth surfaces, and very few obstacles. This gives drivers a sense of comfort and control, which often leads them to drive faster without realising how quickly their speed is increasing," he said.

He added that the study deliberately focused on road stretches that allow free move-

ment to better understand driver behaviour. "We conducted the study on stretches with at least 500 metres of continuous road, where there were no speed breakers, sharp curves, schools, or other obstacles. This helped us assess the speeds vehicles tend to reach when the road allows uninterrupted driving," Dr. Sukumar explained.

Experts also emphasise on the need for targeted action. Dr. Sukumar said light motor vehicles, especially SUVs, must be a key focus for traffic enforcement. "The police should continue to strengthen enforcement through both electronic monitoring and on-ground roadside checks across all districts.

Special attention must be given to light motor vehicles, particularly SUVs, and to expressways where speeding is most common. Fine notices should be issued immediately, and penalty amounts must be appropriately adjusted to encourage better compliance with road safety laws across the state. And customised training workshops should be conducted for traffic personnel to help them better understand speeding patterns in the city, along with the policies and enforcement measures needed to address them effectively," he said.

Measures suggested

The study has also recommended a series of measures for the Karnataka State Road Safety Authority and key civic agencies to further reduce speeding and improve road safety. These include strengthening speed enforcement alongside mass media awareness campaigns and linking traffic fines to vehicle registration systems to prevent renewals for repeat offenders with unpaid dues. It also calls for coordination with road-building agencies to introduce speed-calming measures such as humps and rumble strips, especially in high-risk and pedestrian-heavy zones. Agencies have been urged to audit existing roads and ensure all new infrastructure meets safety standards.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Jahir Hussain Mohamed Kasim S/o Mohamed Kasim R/o No 92/2,Masudi Street, Kaggalipura,B'lore 560082 have changed my name to Jahir Hussain Mohammed Kasim

I, NISHA SHAH alias NISHA JASMINE SHAH R/at F-001, Moti Apt. No 5, North Park Road, Kumara Park East Bangalore - 560001 have changed my name to NISHA NIRAV SHAH vide affidavit dated 19/01/2026 sworn before notary V.Rangaramu Bangalore

I, Zameer Pasha R/O #20 2nd Crs Jayamahal Rd, Bengaluru-46 in my passport my father's name wrongly mentioned as Abdul Ghani, but actual name is M Abdul Ghani for all purposes.

I, Kalgangouda Trupti D/O Mahaveer Kalgangouda, Changed my name Kalgangouda Trupti to Trupti Mahaveer Kalgangouda for all purpose affidavit no IN-KA54798463116715Y dated 19th Jan 2026 at Bangalore

I, Natasha Gurbaksh Soni, D/O Gurbaksh Lal Soni R/o 3063, Sobha Palladian, Yemlur Junction, HAL Old Airport Road, Marathalli, Bangalore 560037. I have changed my name to Natasha Soni for all purposes

I, MANOJ MUNIKRISHNA aged about 27 Years, S/o M N Munikrishna R/at No.44, Sai Krupa Nilaya, 2nd Cross, Karna Shree Layout, Near Jain Temple, Medahalli, Virgonagar Post, Bangalore- 560049 have changed my name from MANOJ MUNIKRISHNA to MANOJ MUNIKRISHNA vide affidavit dated: 16/1/2026 Before Notary Nijagunaradhya T.C Bangalore.

I Michael Antony S/O, Joseph Anthony R/o Rt Nagar 1st Block, No 1, 2 Nd Floor Bangalore 560032 have changed my name to J Michael Antony.

I, M SRINIVAS Alias SRINIVASAN MUDALAGIRIYAPPA, Residing at No 1/84, 8th Main Road, 1st Block East, RBI Colony, Jayanagar, Bangalore-560011, I here by declare that my correct name M SRINIVAS vide affidavit dated 20/01/2026 sworn before notary G.G Bangalore

I, NIRMALA RAMDAS w/o RAMDAS ATTAVAR R/at 370, 65th Crs, 5th Blk, Rajajinagar, Bangalore - 560010 have changed my name to NIRMALA RAMDASS vide affidavit dated 19/01/2026 sworn before notary V.Rangaramu, Bangalore

I, SREELEKHA KIRAN W/o KIRAN SUNDERRAJ R/at No. 92, 1st cross, LIC Colony, 3rd block, Jayanagar, Bengaluru-560011 have changed my name to SREELEKHA THANDALAM PARAMESWARAN Vide affidavit dated: 20/1/2026 Before Notary K.V.Mani Bangalore.

I, ATHIQUE AHMED DASTHAGIR residing at # No 4, 1st Floor, 5th Cross, Muniveerappa Layout, Shampur, Bangalore - 560045. I have changed my name to ATHIQUE AHMED. Vide affidavit dated 15/01/2026 sworn before notary. Leela Bangalore

I, MADHU RAJENDRA KITTUR D/O RAJENDRA KITTUR, R/O FLAT NO C 202 PLATINA EXOTICA, JK FARM DUBASIPALYA, JK FARM, V A L A G E R A H A L L I, BENGALURU-560059, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM MADHU KITTUR TO MADHU RAJENDRA KITTUR FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

I, PRADEEP KUMAR S, Father of SATHVIK PRADEEP KUMAR GOWDA, Residing at No.6, Old No. 12/13/106, 9th Cross, Byrappa Garden, BSK 3rd Stage, Bangalore, Karnataka - 560085, have changed my minor son's name to SATHVIK PRADEEP KUMAR, vide affidavit dated 23/12/2025, sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

LOST & FOUND

I, H.C. Krishna Murthy And kavitha Krishna Murthy R/a 16,Koustubha p.p. layout, 1st Main Road, Katrguppe, BSK 3rd Stage, Bangalore. have lost my Absolute Sale Deed Document No.JGN-1-02001-2008-09 dated 01-10-2008 at Jigani and Lost Report No.2017092/2026 has been lodged on 19-01-2026 so if anybody Finds the Document please Contact: 9535629428 or inform near by police Station.

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K'taka DGP suspended over 'obscene' conduct

After videos of Director General of Police (Civil Rights Enforcement) allegedly engaging in indecent behaviour go viral, govt orders suspension pending until further inquiry



The Government of Karnataka has suspended K Ramachandra Rao, Director General of Police (DGP) of the Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement, with immediate effect following allegations of obscene conduct. The suspension comes after widely circulated videos and media reports showed Dr Rao engaging in obscene acts while in uniform inside his official chamber.

The state government, citing a violation of Rule 3 of the All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968, issued a Government Order



File photo of DGP K Ramachandra Rao

on January 19, 2026, placing him under suspension pending inquiry. During this period, Rao will receive subsistence allowance but is barred from leaving his headquar-

ters without written permission.

Adding to the pressure, the Karnataka State Women's Commission has demanded strict action against the senior IPS officer, calling for accountability and swift inquiry into his conduct.

In letters sent to the Karnataka Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police on Monday night, the commission called for a transparent inquiry, suspension from service, and strict action under a zero-tolerance policy. The correspondence stated that visuals aired on television channels appeared to show Rao indulging in indecent behaviour with women in his office while in uniform.

"The State Commission for Women has expressed

grave concern over visuals aired on state news channels that reportedly show an IPS officer engaging in obscene conduct and acts constituting sexual misconduct inside his office while in uniform," the letter stated.

The commission highlighted that such conduct by a senior police officer tasked with ensuring women's safety sends a wrong message to society and creates negative sentiments among women in the state. Seeking swift action, the commission urged the authorities to immediately order a transparent inquiry, suspend the officer, and submit a report on action taken within seven days, emphasising strict measures to uphold women's dignity and enforce a zero-tolerance approach. —BMB

SOCIALTATTLE

That went viral

A social media user praised how sustainable cutlery was used at Basavanagudi Habba, amplifying the festival's green message.



Srihari Karanth

First-ever aerial view of the Pink Line Metro during trial run - with peak-hour traffic below!

#Bengaluru #PinkLineMetroStations



@sriharikarant captured the first-ever aerial view of the Pink Line metro trial run, set against peak rush-hour traffic below, a striking view many had missed but instantly admired. Commenters noted it was a breathtaking glimpse of the city from above, unlike anything seen before.

What's tweeting
 In Hoysala Nagar ward, large flex boards showcasing development updates alongside images of elected representatives were installed. A social media user remarked that while MLA may be delivering progress in certain areas, public spaces must not be compromised as pedestrians deserve clear and accessible pathways.



INBRIEF

Bizman swindled of Rs 1.38 cr in stock market scam

A city-based businessman was duped of Rs 1.38 crore in a WhatsApp-based investment scam after being lured into a fraudulent share market scheme with promises of high returns, police said on Tuesday.

According to the complaint, the victim first received a message from an unknown number on December 15, enquiring about carpets and home décor items. After the complainant shared photographs of decorative products, the conversation later shifted to online share trading. The fraudsters sent links between December 17 and January 14, directing the victim to purported trading platforms. Believing the offers to be genuine, the complainant entered personal details and transferred a total of Rs 1,38,20,060 to multiple bank accounts as instructed. The fraud came to light on January 15 when the victim attempted to withdraw the invested amount along with the promised profits. At that stage, the fraudsters allegedly demanded additional payment towards "service tax," prompting the complainant to suspect foul play. Following this, the victim approached the Mangaluru CEN Police Station, where a case has been registered. Investigations are underway to trace the accused, track the bank accounts involved and recover the defrauded amount. The police have advised the public to exercise caution before making any transactions. PTI

65 women to be part of CISF Cyclothon

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) will roll out the second edition of its ambitious 'Vande Mataram Coastal Cyclothon 2026' from January 28, aiming to strengthen coastal security awareness while promoting fitness, discipline and national unity. Speaking on the sidelines of preparations in Goa, N Prakash Reddy, Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Airport Sector, Western Zone, said the cyclothon will see strong participation from women personnel across both coasts. "There will be 65 female personnel covering

both the West and East coasts, starting on January 28. The West Coast leg will begin at Lakhpur Fort in Gujarat, covering Gujarat, Daman and Diu, Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka, and will culminate in Kerala on February 21 with the final event," Reddy said. He added that the East Coast journey will start from Haldia in West Bengal, pass through Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu, and also conclude in Kerala, with both routes converging in Kochi.

ANI

HC raps politician over threat and abuse

The Karnataka High Court on Tuesday rapped Congress leader Rajeev Gowda in connection with a case involving threats and abuse directed at a woman municipal commissioner over the phone and questioned the government for not booking him under serious charges. A High Court bench headed by Justice M Nagaprasanna pulled up the petitioner, Rajeev Gowda, while hearing a petition

seeking quashing of the FIR registered against him in the case. The court further remarked that even tendering an apology would not rectify the mindset that caused the hurt. The bench reserved the matter for orders and adjourned the case. Women's Commission has condemned the alleged incident and urged authorities to initiate action. IANS

Sabarimala gold case: ED conducts raids

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted simultaneous raids in Bengaluru and Ballari in connection with the sensational theft case of 4.5 kilograms of gold from the famous Sabarimala Ayyappa Swamy temple in Kerala. The raids were being carried out at the residences and properties of the main accused, Unnikrishnan Potti, and other trustees, officials



said on Tuesday. Ballari gold trader Govardhan is accused of purchasing gold from the main accused, Unnikrishnan Potti. The investigations have revealed that Ballari-

based gold trader Govardhan played a key role in the gold theft case. The main accused, Unnikrishnan Potti, is alleged to have sold the gold stolen from the temple to Govardhan. On charges of illegally purchasing 470 grams of gold, Kerala SIT officials have already arrested Govardhan, and he is in jail. More details are yet to emerge regarding the development. IANS

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 January, 2026

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Accompanied By:
 Amit Choubey &
 Sapan Anjaria on Tabla

Accompanied By:
 Satyajit Talwalkar on Tabla
 Sanjoy Das on Guitar

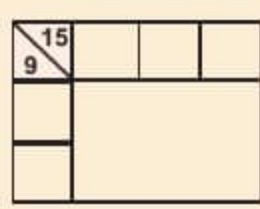
Initiative by

Radio Partner

Tickets at
 Bookmyshow

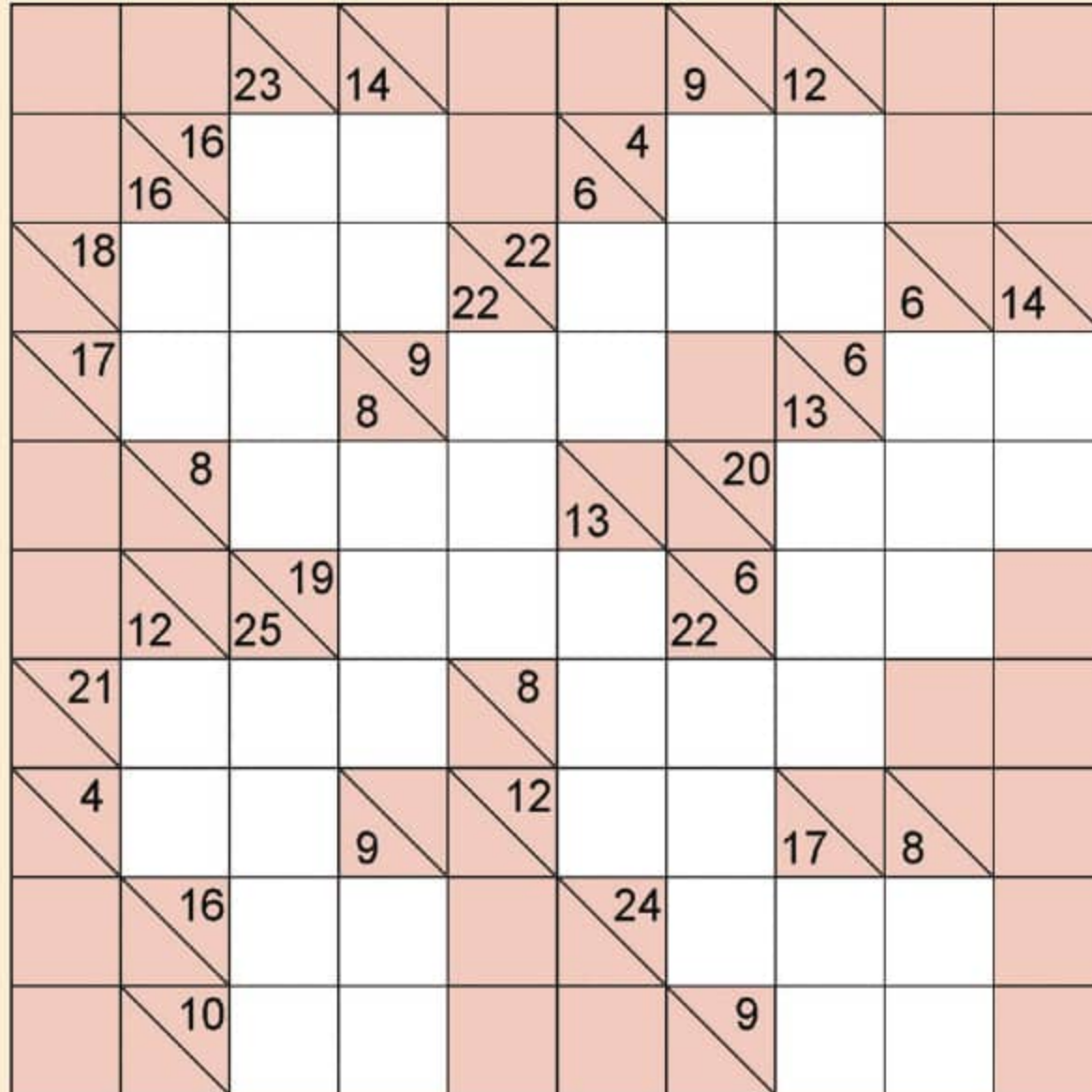
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

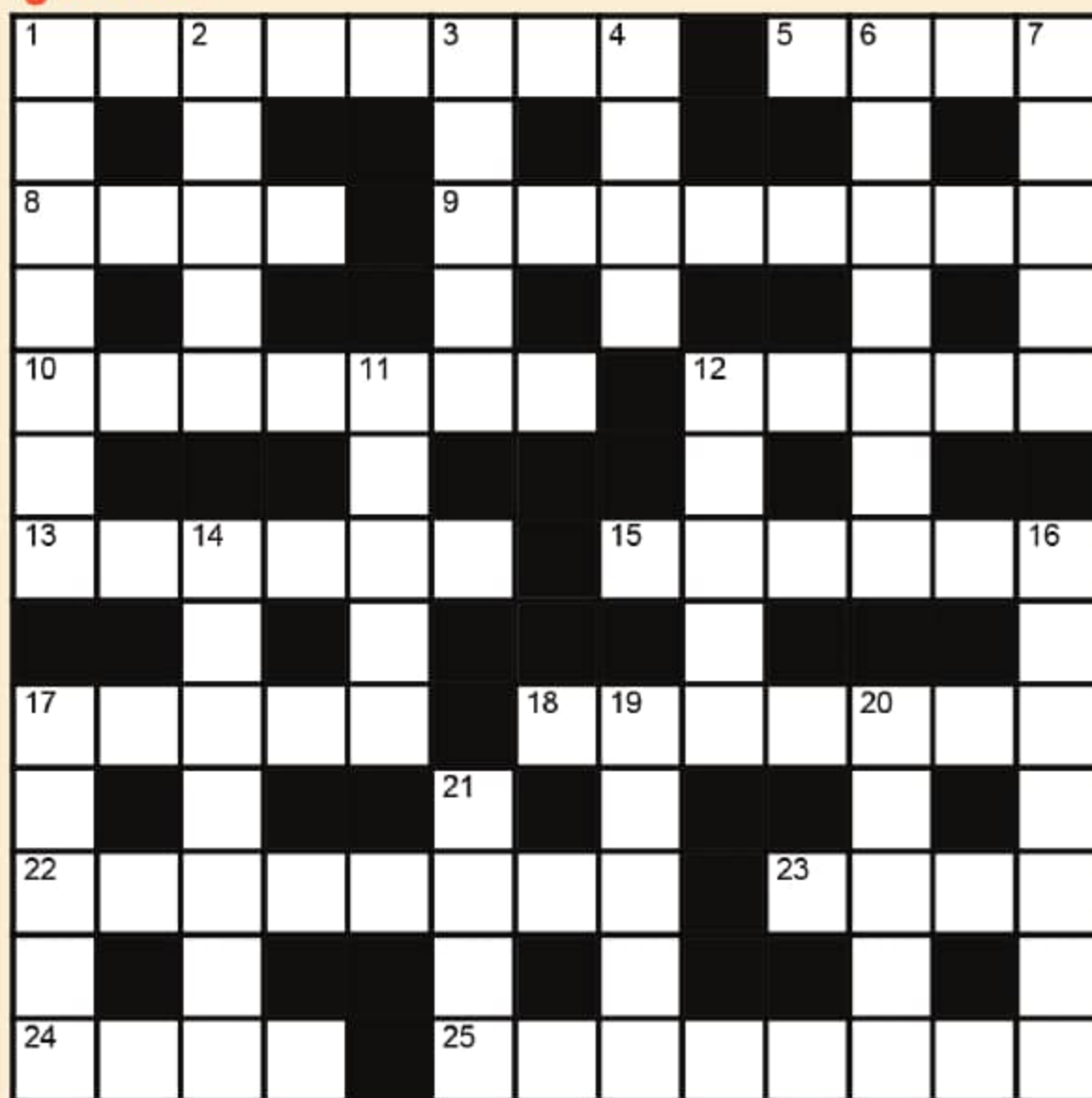


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

- 1 Swap (8)
- 5 Fifty percent (4)
- 8 Listen (4)
- 9 Trod roughly underfoot (8)
- 10 Roused to vigilance (7)
- 12 Card game authority (5)
- 13 Film-star Bergman's first name (6)
- 15 Becomes interested or aroused, in a way? (4,2)
- 17 Sign of subtraction (5)
- 18 Wagering, risking or betting (7)
- 22 Smokers' accessories (8)
- 23 Indian wrestling great _____ Singh (4)
- 24 Coward; sissy (4)
- 25 Is humiliated? (4,4)

DOWN

- 1 Cinema in the Banashankari area (7)
- 2 Packing-case (5)
- 3 Our (French) (5)
- 4 Airline from Lod (4)
- 6 Very much agape with amazement (3,4)
- 7 Fake one's results (5)
- 11 Identical pair (5)
- 12 Israeli port (5)
- 14 Checked cotton cloth (7)
- 16 Colourful parade (7)
- 17 A catty comment? (5)
- 19 The idiot box (2,3)
- 20 Japanese porcelain (5)
- 21 Glass slab (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: J EQUALS P
FCVM JMCJAM XC QC JZYM-FQF; CQUMZF QC JCMQZP; Y QC VP RZYMHLF.-OYZXYHYS ECCAR



Linemaro

Do you have a pencil? Because I will erase your past and write our future



Mindchow

We do not remember days, we remember moments. The richness of life lies in memories we have forgotten



Joke of the day

Confucius say...two wrongs not make a right, but two rights make a u-turn

Loop

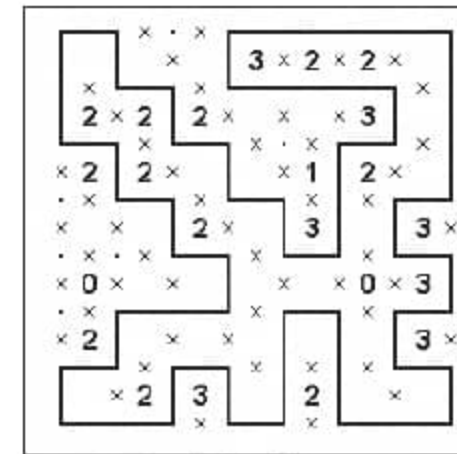
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

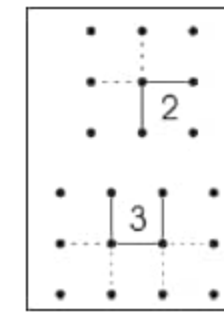
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) - Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

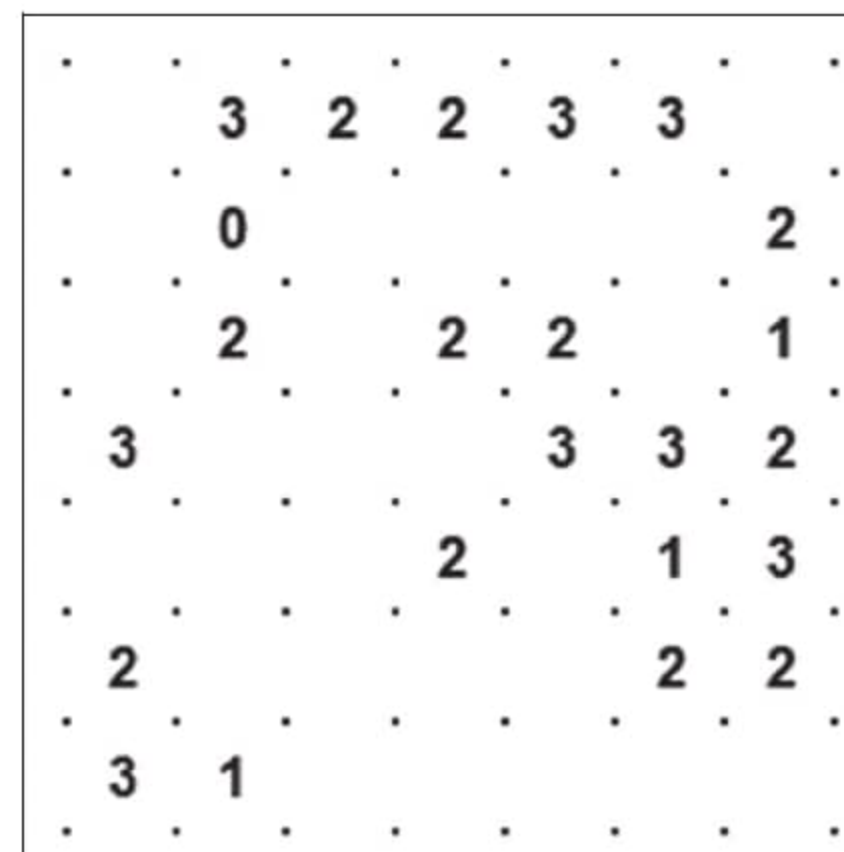
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



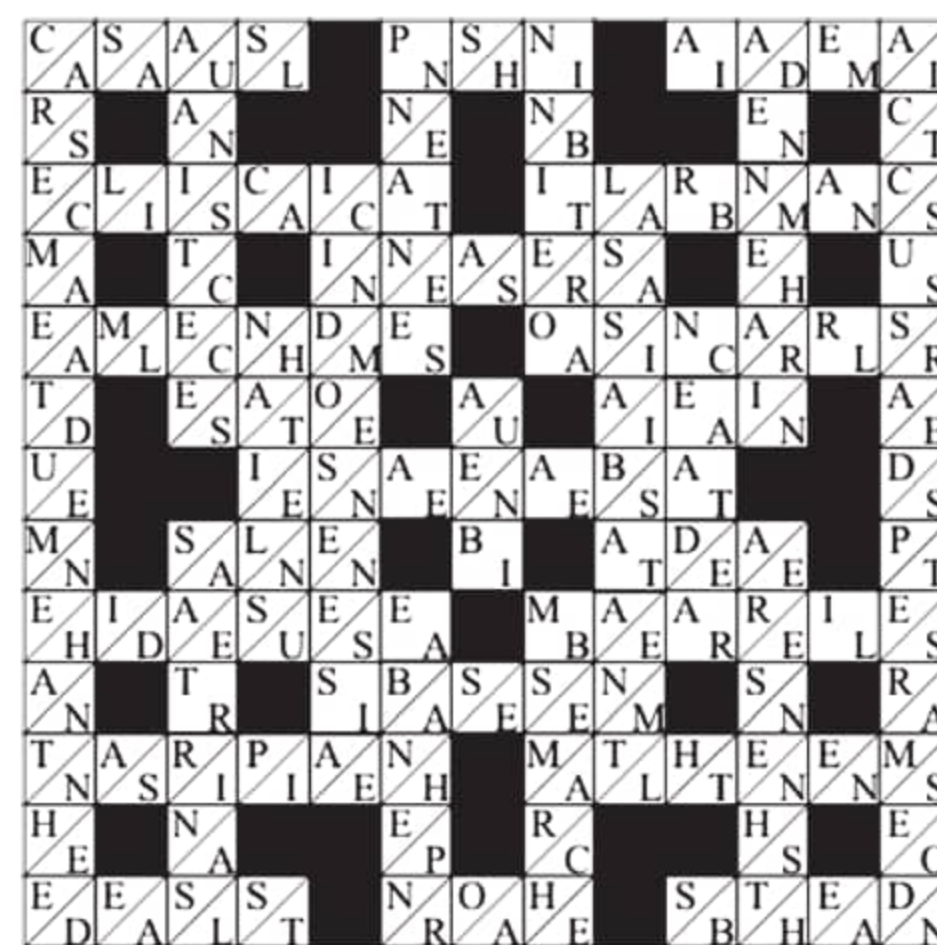
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



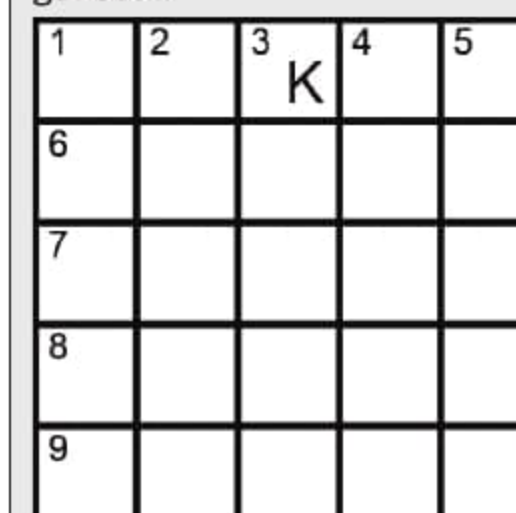
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

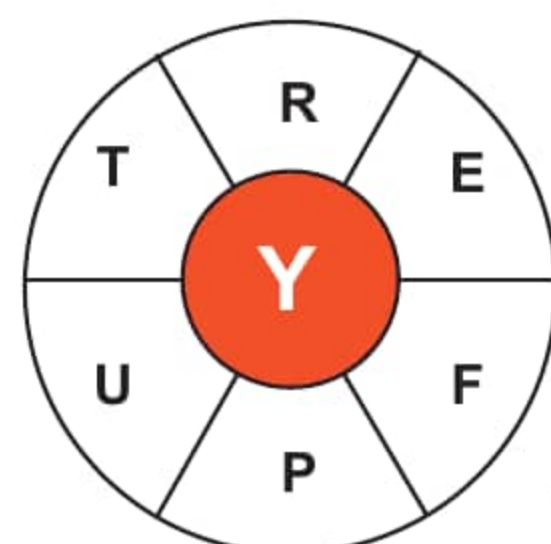
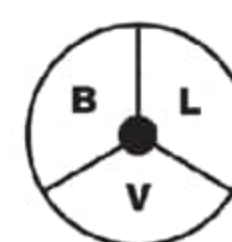
- 1 Spoke; 6 Hap he;
- 7 A tear; 8 Dr Ike;
- 9 Arils

DOWN

- 1 Plier; 2 Or ape;
- 3 Ha Kik; 4 Arete;
- 5 Sad Sh

Mensapuzzle

Which number will finish this grid?

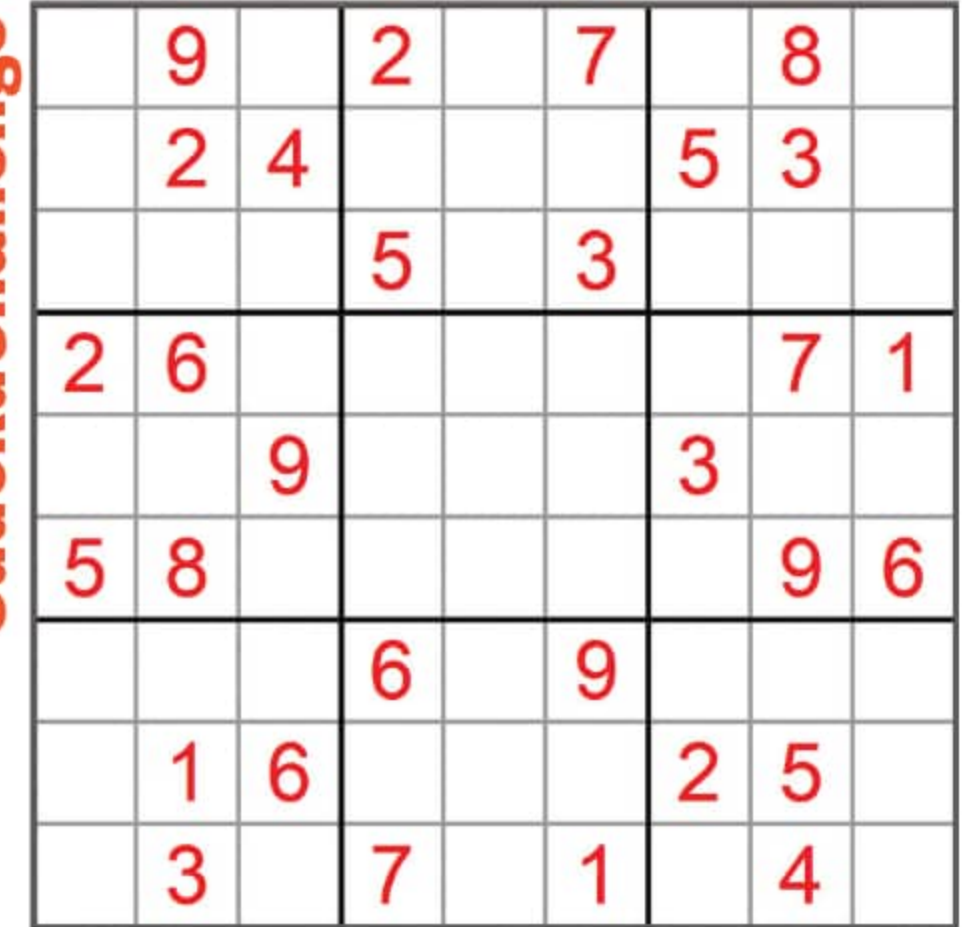


Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; 05 Good; 06 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge



To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Easy

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

5 5 8 8 = 10

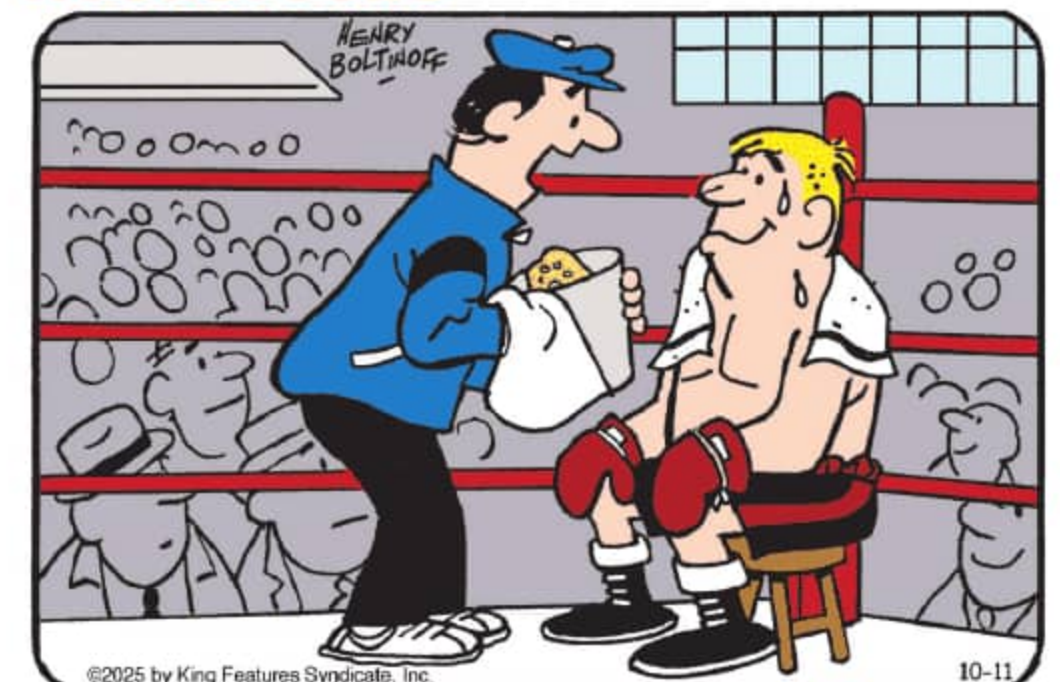
Medium

2 5 6 7 = 25

Hard

2 4 5 6 = 4

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Towel is longer. 2. Leg is moved. 3. Rope section is missing. 4. Spectator's hat is missing. 5. Fingers are not showing. 6. Pail is smaller.

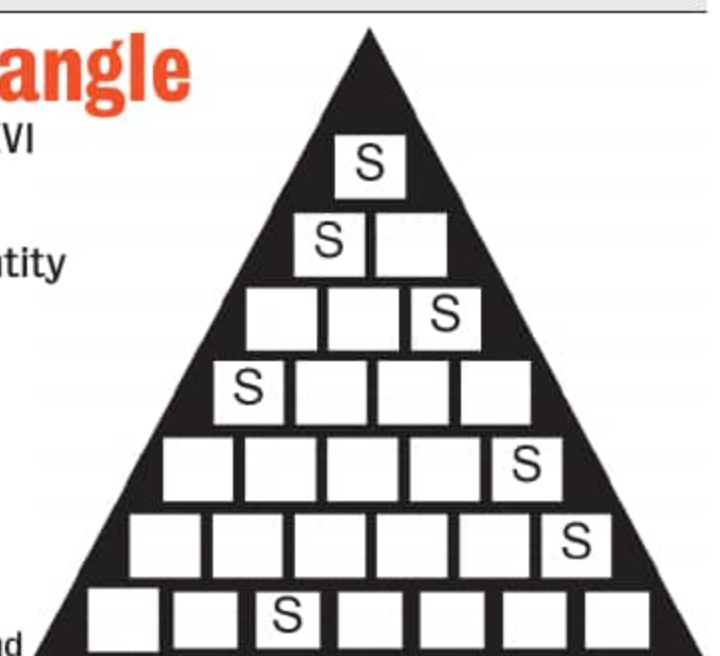
Riddler

Twenty people, (men, women, and children) receive a total of twenty coins. Each man receives the value of three coins. Each woman receives one and a half coins. Each child receives half a coin. How many men, women, and children are there?

Alpha triangle

- 1 Atomic number XVI
- 2 Thus
- 3 Dawn deity
- 4 Unspecified quantity
- 5 Tiny bits
- 6 Celestial bodies
- 7 Actor's outfit

Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.



COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip



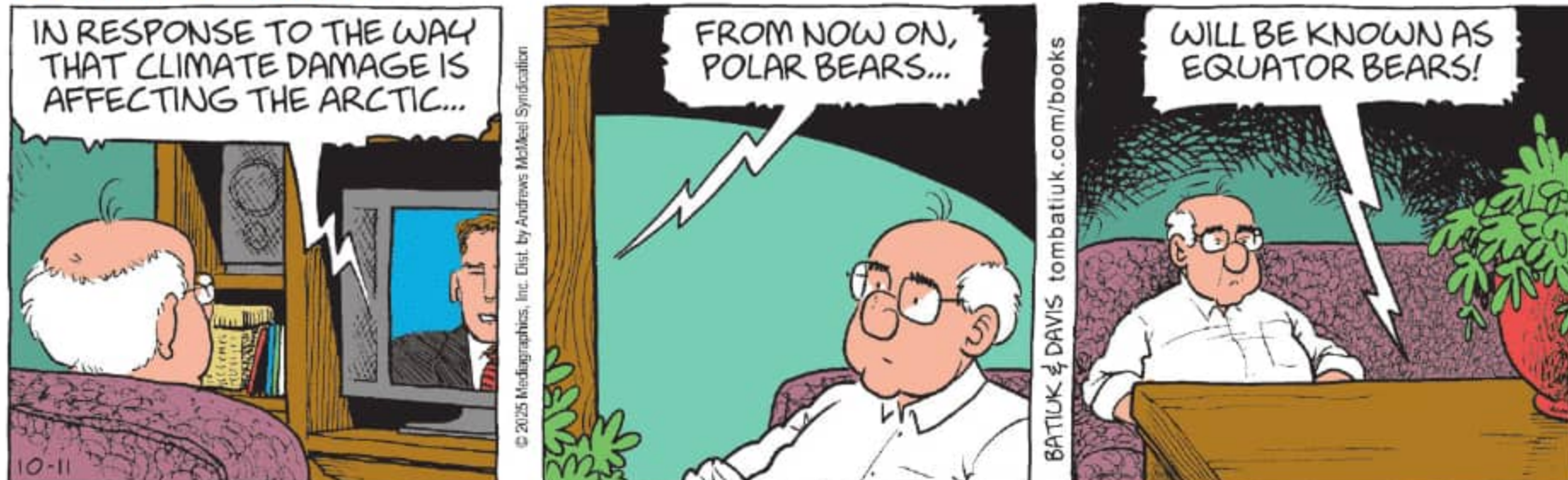
Diamond Lil



Hart of the city



Crankshaft



Mutts



WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR



If it's your birthday today

This year, your creative energy is at an all-time high, urging you to pursue joyful and expressive activities. Romance and pleasure take centre stage, deepening your appreciation for life. Don't shy away from the spotlight; your unique talents deserve recognition. Focus on what brings you genuine joy, and success will naturally follow your passion.

Aries Mar 21-Apr 20

Dynamic conversations inspire exciting possibilities today. Friendly exchanges may spark future opportunities. Stay centred, follow your priorities, and use this vibrant flow of ideas to strengthen your progress.



Leo Jul 24 - Aug 23

Your ambition shines brightly today. Career success feels closer as your enthusiasm attracts recognition. Strengthen your momentum with consistent effort. Your passion inspires others and fuels meaningful progress.



Sagittarius Nov 23-Dec 22

Leadership energy empowers decisive progress. Completing tasks builds confidence. Take initiative and formalise your intentions. Your steady momentum shapes a bright future as meaningful opportunities begin to unfold.



Taurus Apr 21-May 20

Abundant choices empower meaningful progress. Discipline supports important goals as celestial energy enhances your commitment. Romantic or professional plans grow stronger.



Virgo Aug 24-Sep 23

Clear visions guide you toward practical success. Recognition for past efforts brings encouragement. Awaited news supports your growing confidence. Prepare thoughtfully and welcome opportunities that highlight your skill.



Capricorn Dec 23-Jan 20

Collaboration enhances your progress today. Inviting assistance opens new possibilities. Explore widely before refining your direction. Shared insights strengthen outcomes and support your long-term goals with clarity.



Gemini May 21-Jun 21

Personal dreams feel attainable today. Creative inspiration flows naturally as new ideas reveal clear direction. Momentum builds as you transform intentions into reality, supported by emotional clarity.



Libra Sep 24-Oct 22

Limitations dissolve as imagination expands. New openings in travel, publishing, or business invite excitement. Trust your inspiration and pursue bold ideas. Fortune supports your creativity.



Aquarius Jan 21-Feb 19

Opening your heart brings healing clarity. Expressing emotions gently strengthens trust. Seek support from reliable connections and welcome new allies. Courageous honesty deepens bonds and helps you grow meaningfully.



Cancer Jun 22-July 23

Determined steps forward bring powerful progress. Releasing past limitations frees your spirit and strengthens purpose. Courageous honesty helps growth, allowing you to embrace opportunities with confidence.



Scorpio Oct 23-Nov 22

Supportive people help guide your plans today. Promising opportunities blossom as you gather helpful insights. Steady preparation strengthens progress. Emotional and material goals align beautifully.



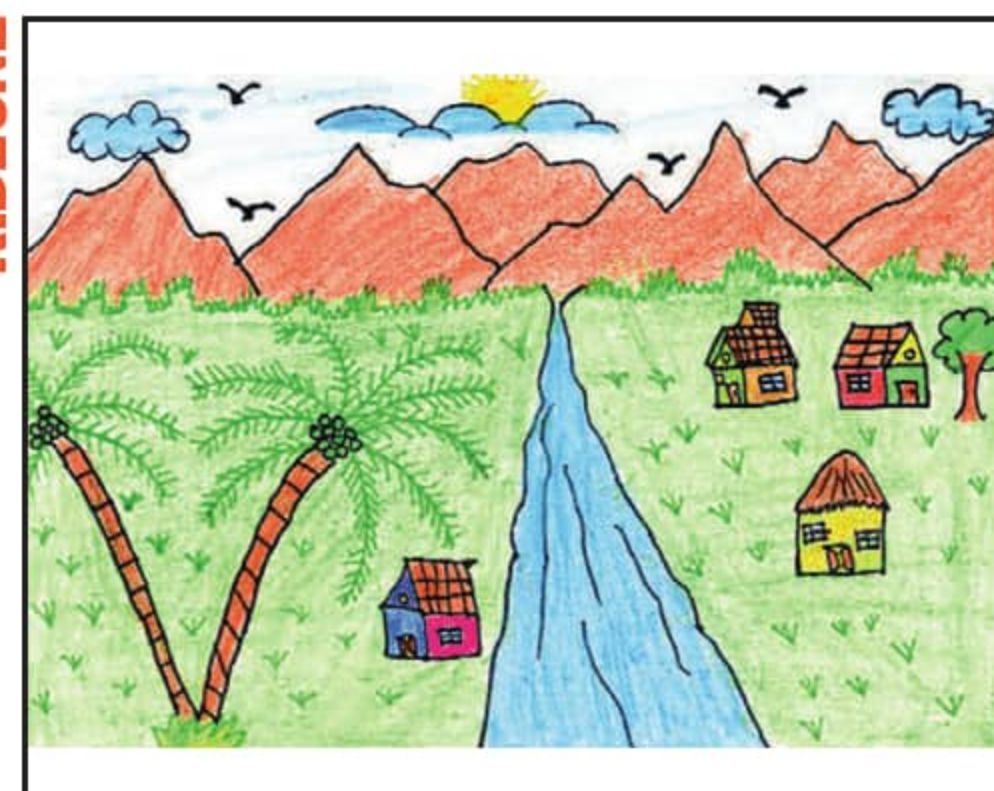
Pisces Feb 20-Mar 20

Heartfelt conversations bring harmony within your family. Balance emerges through understanding and acceptance. Nurture yourself. Emotional clarity helps you approach situations peacefully.

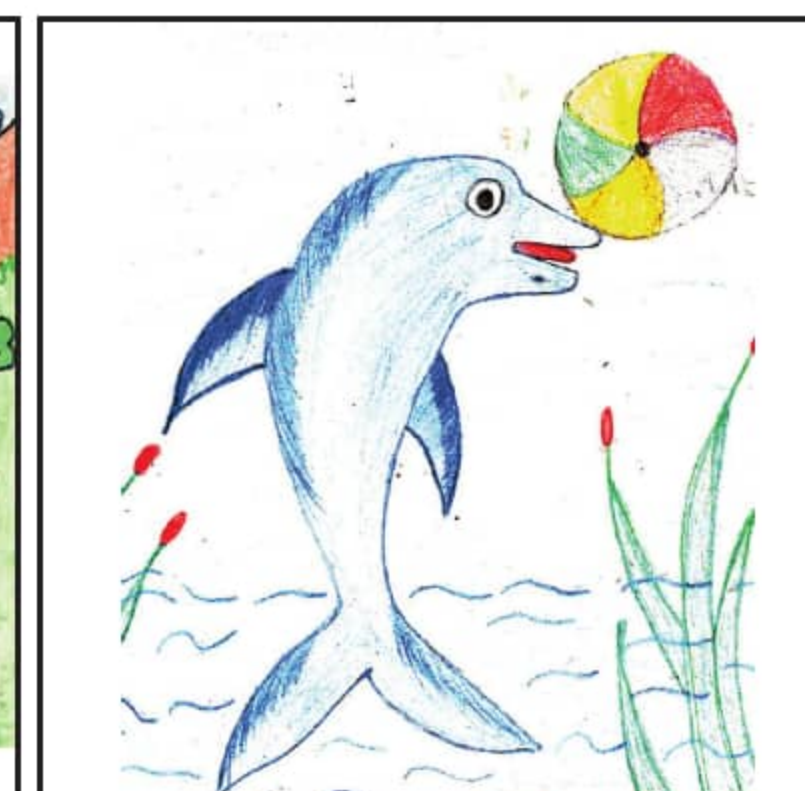


www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Sahana, Bengaluru



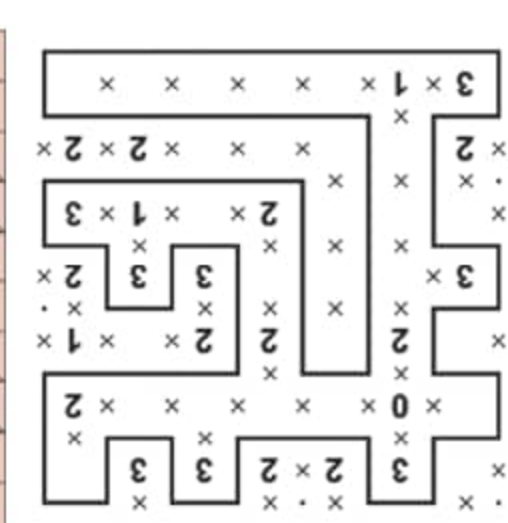
Suhani, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

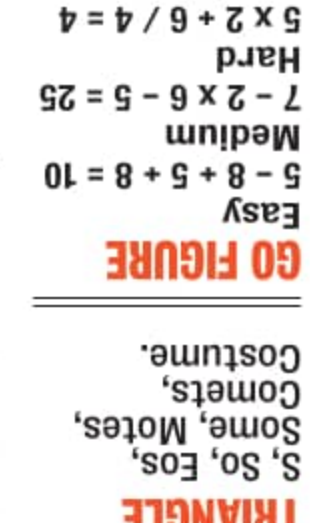
SOLUTIONS



KAKURO



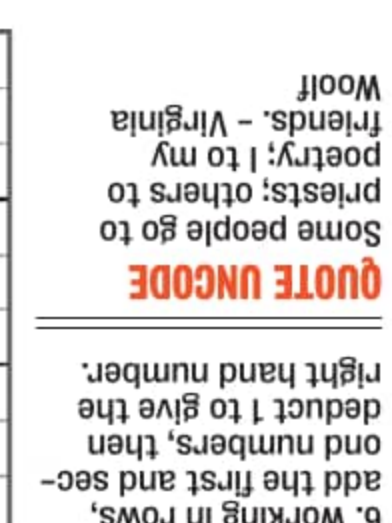
LOOP



ALPHA



SUDOKU



MENSA PUZZLE



QUICK



STRIKE OUT



BULL'S EYE



SOLVE IN 1M

Pooja Hegde's cinematic evolution

From South roots to pan-India stardom, resilience learned

Pooja Hegde's entry into the Indian film industry was shaped by strong self-belief developed outside cinema, while her early work in South Indian films laid the foundation of her acting career. Beginning with Tamil cinema and moving swiftly into successful Telugu projects, she gained a clear understanding of industry practices and the discipline required to survive a highly competitive environment. Her subsequent foray into Hindi films further broadened this perspective, helping her navigate differences in scale, working styles, and audience expectations. In retrospect, she has often acknowledged that these formative experiences gave her an advantage and enabled her to adapt quickly to a pan-India career.

Working alongside established stars proved transformative. On large sets, senior co-actors offered guidance, ensured professional working conditions, and created a safe environment during demanding scenes. This experience functioned as an informal training ground, reinforcing the importance of punctuality, focus, and professionalism regardless of crowd size or fan attention. Speaking about Prabhas during Radhe

Shyam, she described him as relaxed and playful on set, while also noting his quiet nature with new collaborators. She has similarly credited co-stars such as Allu Arjun, Akhil Akkineni, and Hrithik Roshan for affirming on-screen chemistry, which she attributes to her commitment to romantic storytelling and performance detail. During promotions for *Beast*, she publicly referred to Vijay as the "sweetest," underscoring the supportive environment she has often encountered.

High-budget commercial cinema also sharpened her understanding of audience pulse, from energetic dance numbers to emotionally driven spectacle, while teaching balance between grandeur and performance. Over time, guidance from veterans has encouraged her to avoid short-term competition and seek roles with depth and longevity. Having navigated box-office pressures with resilience, she now approaches her career as a long journey, continuing work across multiple languages while steadily striving to balance mass appeal with meaningful, character-driven performances.

—ETimes



SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Shakuntale debut

Vinay Chandrahasa, who earlier worked as an assistant director to filmmaker Nanda Kishore and as an associate director on Kannada films *Adhyaksha* and *Sugar Factory*, has now stepped into independent direction with his debut feature *Nenapadalu Shakuntale*.

The film was completed in a brisk 32-day schedule across scenic locations including Sakleshpur, Mysuru, Channarayana and Bengaluru. The title evokes memories of *Nenapadalu Shakuntale*, the Kannada adaptation of poet Kalidasa's *Abhijnana Shakuntala*. Speaking about his debut, Vinay Chandrahasa described the film as a feel-good romantic drama aimed largely at youth audiences. The narrative draws inspiration from the mythological tale of King Dushyant and Shakuntala, which influenced both the theme and the title.

The story follows Paarth Saarithi, played by Viraj Kolatlu, a young startup founder coping with heartbreak. A visit to his sister's hometown leads him to a quaint library and an unexpected bond with a woman portrayed by Kavya Bhagavant.



Egg's hidden Targaryen legacy



If you're into *Game of Thrones* or *House of the Dragon*, there's a quieter but deeply fascinating new chapter in the world of Westeros arriving this year. A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms shifts the focus away from thrones, dragons, and sprawling wars, and instead follows two unlikely companions: Ser Duncan the Tall, known as Dunk, and his sharp-tongued young squire, Egg. At first glance, Egg appears to be an ordinary stable boy eager for adventure, but his modest appearance hides a far more significant truth.

Egg is actually Prince Aegon Targaryen, a member of the ruling dynasty who will one day become King Aegon V Set around 209 AC, the story unfolds in a period when dragons are extinct and the Targaryens' power, though intact, is clearly waning. This quieter tale follows Dunk and Egg's bond, revealing loyalty, growth, and humanity in Westeros's fading age together enduringly.

—IANS

Palash Muchhal returns to filmmaking

Composer and filmmaker Palash Muchhal is turning his focus firmly back to work after weeks of intense public scrutiny surrounding his personal life. Following widespread attention over the cancellation of his wedding to Indian cricketer Smriti Mandhana, Muchhal is preparing to begin his next directorial venture, an untitled Hindi film set in Mumbai.

The project will feature Shreyas Talpade in a lead role. According to sources, Talpade will portray an ordinary man, a character rooted in realism, though further details about the storyline, supporting cast, and release timeline

remain under wraps. The film is expected to go on floors shortly in Mumbai and will mark Muchhal's first professional outing since the wedding was officially called off.

Muchhal and Mandhana were slated to marry on November 23, 2025, after being together for several years. After stellar 2025 World Cup win, Mandhana looks ahead to 2026 motivated and focused ahead strongly.

—ETimes



Farnaz Shetty enters Bollywood

Actress Farnaz Shetty, who carved a strong identity in South Indian cinema with films such as *Gaja and Rambo*, is now entering a significant new phase in her career. The actor is set to make her Bollywood debut with the feature film *Adrishya*, marking a long-cherished professional milestone. The film will also feature actor Freddy Daruwala in an important role.

Speaking about the project, Farnaz describes *Adrishya* as a defining moment in her journey. She says she had been patiently waiting for the right script to introduce herself to Hindi cinema and felt the offer arrived at exactly the right time. While details about her character remain under wraps, she calls the

opportunity a "dream come true" that reflects years of sustained effort and perseverance.

Reflecting on her experience across industries, Farnaz notes that while the filmmaking process remains largely universal, language posed the biggest challenge during her years in the South. She credits working alongside veterans such as cinematographer Shyam K Naidu and filmmaker Jagdish Chiketi for shaping her growth and discipline as an actor.

Adding to the momentum, Farnaz has already signed her second Bollywood project, which she hints is "huge," choosing to keep details confidential for now.

—ETimes



Benki unveiled

Hat-trick hero Dr Shiva Rajkumar unveiled the song *Benki* from the Kannada film *Gramayana* at a function held at a hotel. Geetha Shiva Rajkumar was also present on the occasion. The Vinay Rajkumar-Megha Shetty starrer has had a long production journey, spanning nearly three years. The film went on floors in 2018, but shooting was stalled after just 25 days. Production was revived in 2023 with the support of Lahari Films's G Manoharan and KP Srikanth of Venus Entertainers, with Naveen Manoharan joining as co-producer.

Dr Shiva Rajkumar and Geetha Shiva Rajkumar appreciated the quality of *Benki* and extended their best wishes to the cast and crew. The song is said to be a remix of the popular number *Ninnaane Naanu Benkiyalloo* Thampu Kande from *Mana Mechchida Hudugi*, originally sung by the late S P Balasubrahmanyam and S Janaki. The new version is rendered by Kapila Kapilan and Airaa Udupi, with music composed by Poornachandra Tejasvi.

